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THE ROLE OF INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION IN THE DEMOGRAPHIC DEVELOPMENT IN RUSSIA (1992–2004)

Presently, the increasing role of international migration in the demographic development of receiving countries (as well as of countries of origin) is becoming more and more apparent. At that, not only immigration impact on the population growth of some countries or regions of the world are to be considered, but, what is more, the fundamental change in reproductivity, reproductive behaviour, gender, age, and ethnic structure of the receiving countries' population.

International migration and demographic crisis in Russia in 1992–2004

Economic and political transformation of the late 1980s and early 1990s in Russia has called for a unique demographic situation, which was highly controversial with all its previous demographic development trends. In only a few years there has been a dramatic change in all the demographic processes, aggravation of most development parameters both in a quantitative sense and in a qualitative sense. Russia faced demographic crises.

The main features demographic crisis are the following: fertility has fallen considerably in a short period of time (crude birth rate amounted to 10.5‰ in 2004 versus 14.6‰ in 1989; total fertility rate has decreased from 2.1 to 1.3 during the same period), mortality has gone up greatly, particularly among males in working age (crude death rate 16.5‰ in 2003 and 10.7‰ in 1989), mortality simultaneously surged, especially among population in the working age (crude death rate amounted to 16.5‰ in 2004 versus 10.7‰ in 1989, topping from the record 1970 (7.1 ‰)), life expectancy at birth has fallen (from 70 to 65 for both sexes and from 65 to only 58 for males); there has been a decrease in nuptiality and an increase in divorce. These processes resulted in natural decrease, which was observed (excluding the war period of 1941–1945) in Russia since 1992 (-220 thousands annually) and which after 2001 was exceeding 750–850 thousands annually (!). Natural decrease of population between 1992 and 2004 reached 10.2 million persons (while after 2001 it was exceeding 850,000 a year) (see table 1 and picture 1).

It should be noted that while paying much attention to the natural decrease, another maybe even more important problem is overlooked — the problem of overall (spiritual and physical) degradation of the population in Russia and its considerably worsened qualitative characteristics entailed by ever growing smoking, alcoholism, expansion of AIDS and narcotism, lowering educa-

tional level of youth, etc. Over 5% of children born in 2001 (1.3 mln) found themselves thrown outdoors. Total number of orphans was 600 thousands and the number of homeless child over 2 mln. About 90% of school graduates suffer from serious chronic diseases, 2/3 of high school graduates got even more diseases. The number of serious drug addicts will reach 10 mln in coming years. There is a clear crisis of society, and the family as an institution: in 2002 the number of divorces in Russia exceeded the number of marriages.

In particular regions of Russia the situation is even more dramatic. In such federal districts as Siberia and the Far East, which play a strategic role in Russia's national security, there is a significant migration outflow along with the natural decrease of population. Therefore during the 1992–2002 the number of population in the Far East has decreased by 12.4% and in Siberia — by 3.4% (see table 2). In this context it is worth noting that in the bordering regions of China the population has already exceeded 110 million, a number that is 10 times the population of the neighbouring Russian territories.

On the other side, in the 1990s many of the former Soviet republics has carried out (implicitly or explicitly) a policy of pushing out the non-ethnicals. Thus, Russia with its “transparent boundaries” has become huge attraction for millions of former Soviet nationals. As a result, immigration into Russia, taking diverse forms (forced, voluntary, illegal, etc.) made up 7.1 million in the period of 1992–2004. The 2002 Population Census in Russia has shown that the migrational inflow between the last two censuses (1989 and 2002) had been significantly higher and amounted to 11 million. At the beginning of the 21st century Russia is ranked second by the share of foreigners in the total population (after the USA) (see picture 2), and third by immigration inflow in 1992–2002 (after the United States and Germany).

So, in the 1990s the role of international migration in the demographic development in Russia has significantly risen. Net migration to Russia has appreciably compensated natural population decrease (55% in 1992–1997, 16% in 1998–2004, and 35% in 1992–2004) (see table 1). It should be noted that net migration increase considerably slowed lately and was 39 thousands in 2004 compared to 810 thousands in 1994. And the root of this trend lies mainly in unreasoned decisions from the side of the government.

We would like to emphasize, that immigration to Russia positively influences its age and sex population structure, contributes improvement of the population quality (for instance, there is evidence of a higher educational level of migrants in comparison with average level of local population), and brings higher reproductive preferences.

Looking at the immigrants' structure by age and sex, one can notice that the age structure is younger than for Russia on average. Thus, in 2002 over 70% of the immigrants were at their working age, the second largest age group was the youth (below working age) accounting for 15% of the in-flow, and only 13% were retirees; for Russia as a whole the corresponding figures were 19, 60 and 21% (see pictures 3a and 3b). At the same time between 1992 and 2003 the immigrants tended to be increasingly older: there were 12.9% retirees in 2003 compared to 8% in 1992, and the share of young people dropped to 14.3% from 22% during the same period. Females dominate the migration inflows (53% in 2002), and this is caused by their prevalence in the elderly group, where women account for 70.5% (see picture 4a and 4b).

Regarding ethnic structure of immigration, most of migrants are ethnic Russians. On the whole, ethnic Russians have made up to 60% of all arrivals in 1992–2004, about 9% of immigrants represent other nationalities residing in Russia. However, the share of Russians in net-migration is continuously decreasing: from 76% in 1993 to 56% in 2001. According to 2002 Population Census, the share of Russians in the total population of Russia is about 80%. So, immigration inputs diversification of ethnical structure of Russia's population.

International migration in Russia in the 21st century:

Is it solution to demographic crisis in Russia?

As it is declared by almost all the forecasts (both made by Russian and foreign demographers), in the 21st century (at least until 2050) Russia will face natural decrease of population. For example, according to the United Nations forecasts, in 2000–2050 the annual natural decrease of population will be around 860,000 persons (UN, 2003). At the same time, Russia as well as the Western Europe the problem of the ageing of population will become more and more critical. As a result social expenses related to the population ageing can become a heavy burden on the budget while some regions will simply become deserted.

Under such conditions migration inflow may seem “panacea” to improve demographic situation and maintain population growth. Could international migration be a solution of demographic problems of Russia in the 21st century?

Predictions of the UN experts (see, for sample, report “Replacement migration: Is it a Solution to Declining and Ageing Populations”) and the authors of Russia's annual demographic review prove that in order to return to zero natural increase of population Russia should have steady positive net migration from 800,000 persons to 1,500,000 persons per year (according to various scenarios) (see Population of Russia 2000, p. 143). This perspective is obviously unreal (in 2002 net mi-

gration to Russia was 77,000 persons and in 2004 only 39,000 persons). According to UN estimations (UN, 2003) net migration in 2000–2050 will be around 50,000 persons a year.

Thus, the role of migration in managing demographic crisis should not be overestimated. The statement that immigration can be a solution for all the demographic problems of contemporary Russia is definitely a very erroneous one. It is an ordinary myth, which confuses the government of the country and brings them to wrong conclusions. Immigration can only smoothen the current demographic crisis to a certain extent, it can soften some negative consequences, and solve some regional demographic problems (for example, in Siberia or in the Far East), but no more. The sample of developed countries shows that only under the circumstances of depopulation migration can be an effective demographic instrument¹². In order to overcome demographic crisis in Russia and provide its further positive development, a wide complex of measures is to be undertaken namely: to stimulate fertility, to enhance family institution, to consider an individual's life as the most important value of the state. The measures of demographic policy as a whole and migration policy in particular should be worked out correspondingly.

However, for certain periods and for certain purposes, as we have already mentioned, international migration can have positive effect on demographic development. So, the forthcoming decline in numbers of labor-active age groups in Russia (not as a result of demographic “wave” but as a steady tendency) can be partly compensated by attracting foreign labor.

These trends are to be laid in the basement of reasonable migration policy. From our point of view, following the strategic interests of the Russian Federation, the government migration policy should promote immigration of the Russian-speaking population from the ex-Soviet Union republics. However, in spite of over 5-years public discussion on the Russia's migration policy concept there is still no definite governmental strategy in this field. For this reason, migration management in the country is rushing from one exceptional objective — forced migration, to the other — illegal migration. Moreover, the idea of immigration as a negative phenomenon is now prevailing among government officers, and combating illegal immigration is thought to be the main function of the Federal Migration Service. Nowadays conditions the most important issue for Russia is to determine the strategy of its migration management that should take into account economic, demographic, ethnic

¹² In our opinion depopulation is a “narrowed” reproduction of population when every new generation does not compensate the previous one. This process can last during rather long time, and it is not necessarily followed by negative natural population rate or population size decrease. For example, in Germany depopulation is going on since the end of the 1960's, however, natural decrease is measured in miserable percentage, so it can't be the evidence of “deep demographic crisis” in Germany. As to Russia, situation here is absolutely different.

and other dimensions of its development. This strategy should be based on understanding *migration as an advantage for Russia but not an evil that is to be repressed by governmental institutions.*

Conclusion

In Russia, which faces deep demographic crisis, international migration in the 1990s has become an important factor of its demographic development. And as a matter of fact, it is the sole component which smoothes over the negative demographic situation. At the same time, it should be emphasized that demographic crisis can't be dealt with at the expense of migration. Only increased and stabilized fertility at the reproduction on a simple scale, strengthened family institution and lowered mortality, as well as increased life expectancy can improve demographic situation in Russia and secure social and economic development in the country.

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Appendix

Table 1. Components of population size changes in Russia (thousands)

Years	Population by the end of years	Total Increase	Including	
			Nat. Increase	Net migration**
1897*	67473	-	-	-
1897-1916	91000	23527	24392	-865
1917-1926	93600	2600	5100	-2500
1927-1940	111359	17759	16960	799
1941-1945	97547	-13812	-9953	-3859
1946-1950	102945	5398	6505	-1107
1951-1955	112266	9321	9991	-670
1956-1960	120766	8500	9283	-783
1961-1965	127189	6423	6944	-521
1966-1970	130704	3515	4107	-592
1971-1975	134690	3986	4180	-195
1976-1980	139028	4338	3731	607
1981-1985	143835	4807	3938	869
1986-1991	148704	4869	3759	1110
1917-1991	148704	57704	64545	-6841***
1992	148750	46	-207	253
1993	148452	-298	-738	440
1994	148393	-59	-869	810
1995	148063	-330	-833	503
1996	147591	-472	-816	344
1997	147191	-400	-750	350
1998	146771	-420	-705	285
1999	146003	-768	-923	155
2000	145263	-740	-954	214
2001	144392	-871	-943	72
2002	143534	-858	-935	77
2003	142682	-852	-889	35
2004	141931	-751	-790	39
1992-2004	141931	-6775	-10352	3577

* As for beginning of the year; ** Including migration balance with non-former Soviet Union countries: between 1927 and 1940 as well as between 1951 and 1987 it was not numerous (e.g. in 1986 — 2,300 in comparison with 20,400 in 1989 and 102,500 in 1990). It was mostly sizable between 1917 and 1925 when more than 2,5 million persons had emigrated to the Western European countries, the USA and other foreign states; *** This figure includes nearly 3,6 million persons who had emigrated to non-former Soviet states.

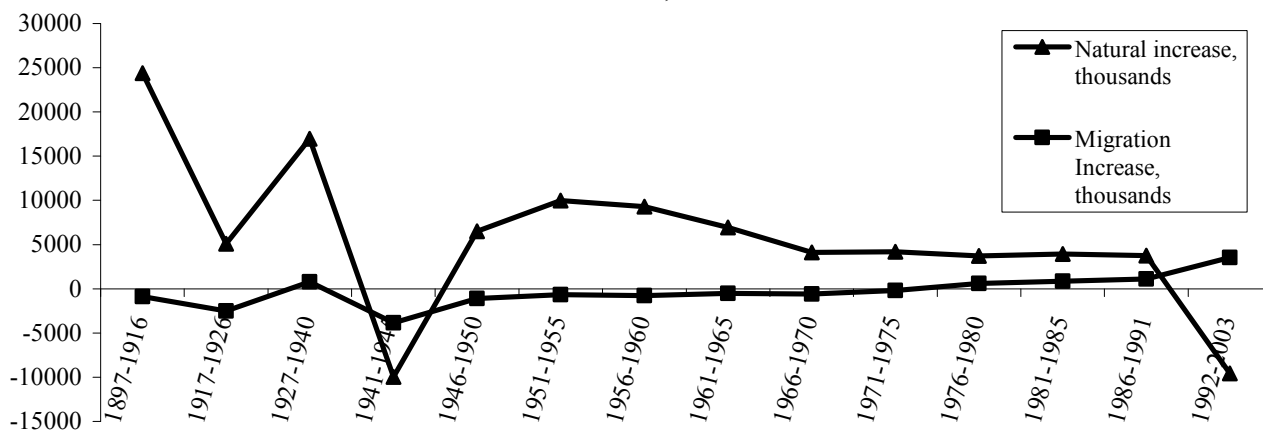
Sources: Population of Russia. 1973. Moscow, 1975, pp. 14, 70 (in Russian); Population of Russia over Hundred Years (1897–1997). Moscow, 1998, pp. 32–34, 84–85; Population and Migration in the Russian Federation in 1999–2004. Moscow, Goskomstat, 2000–2005 (in Russian).

Table 2. Demographic development in Russia, Siberia and the Far East Federal Districts (thousands)

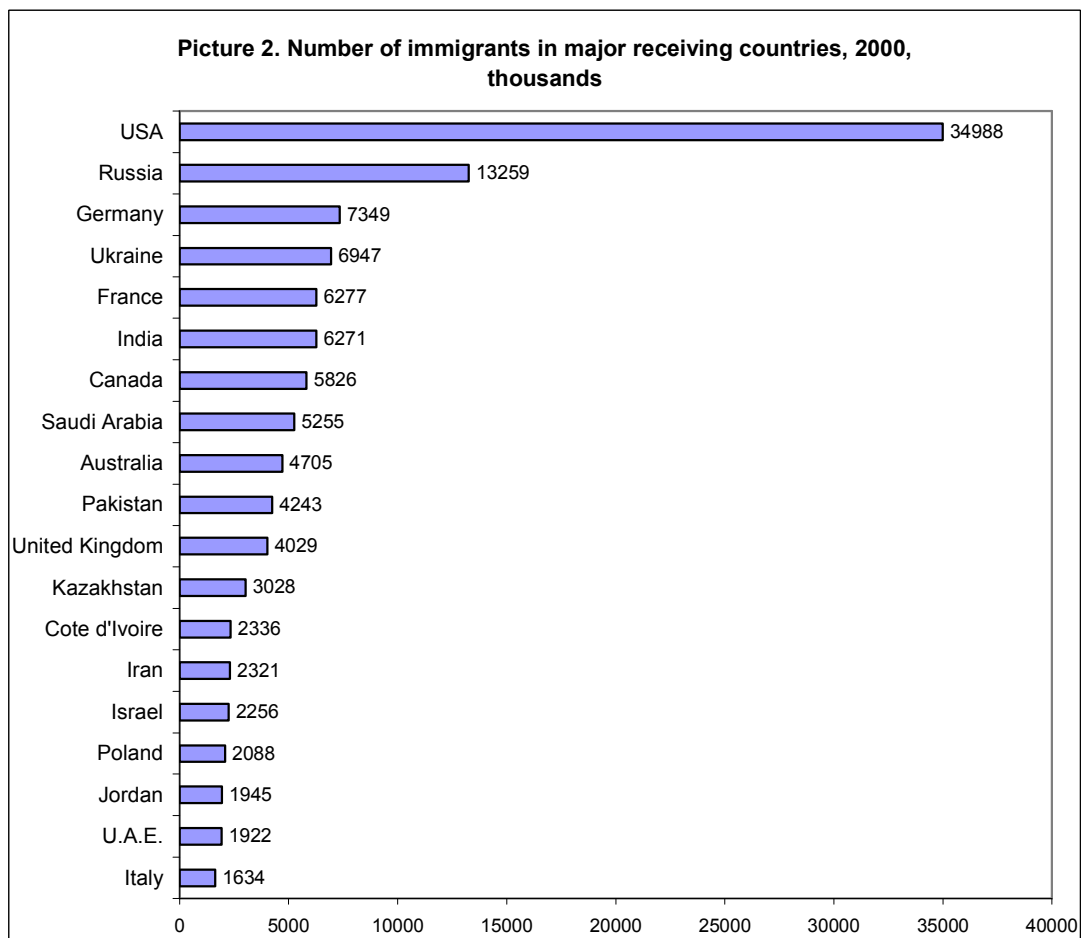
	Population	Total change	natural decrease (increase)	including		migration increase (decrease)	including	
				births	deaths		arrivals	departures
<i>Russia</i>								
1992	148704	33,2	-219,8	1587,64	1807,44	253,00	-	-
1994	148366	-83,6	-893,21	1408,16	2301,37	809,61	1146,73	337,12
1997	147502	-380,4	-755,84	1259,94	2015,78	375,44	1824,14	1448,7
1998	147105	-405,81	-705,45	1283,29	1988,74	299,64	1660,44	1360,8
1999	146328	-781,14	-929,63	1214,69	2144,32	148,49	1478,06	1329,58
2000	145559	-740,55	-958,53	1266,8	2225,33	217,98	1369,28	1151,31
2001	144819	-870,97	-943,25	1311,6	2254,86	72,28	2334,03	2261,75
2002	143954	-856,70	-934,6	1396,8	2331,4	77,9	2201,34	2123,44
<i>Siberia Federal District</i>								
1992	21245		6,45	243,88	237,43	-	-	-
1994	21163	6,91	-85,01	194,14	279,16	91,92	390,78	298,85
1997	21031	-64,42	-80,77	194,47	275,24	16,35	262,63	246,28
1998	20969	-137,23	-65,61	199,77	265,39	-71,62	158,64	230,26
1999	20900	-121,78	-100,01	189,49	289,5	-21,77	208,01	229,78
2000	20783	-111,96	-100,68	198,00	298,68	-11,28	185,99	197,27
2001	20675	-132,95	-97,27	205,15	302,42	-35,68	413,82	449,5
2002	20542	-131,58	-97,94	219,74	317,67	-33,64	384,1	417,74
<i>The Far East Federal District</i>								
1992	8032		16,78	93,65	76,87	-	-	-
1994	7788	-130,97	-15,12	82,58	97,7	-115,85	143,48	259,33
1997	7421	2,64	-15,45	68,63	84,09	-65,99	91,67	157,67
1998	7336	1,11	-11,66	69,47	81,13	-68,36	79,9	148,26
1999	7261	-92,61	-22,43	64,49	86,92	-70,18	72,22	142,41
2000	7168	-60,99	-23,94	66,5	90,44	-37,05	67,01	104,06
2001	7107	-55,58	-23,34	70,03	93,36	-32,24	137,85	170,09
2002	7038	-49,78	-21,97	73,86	95,83	-27,81	133,82	161,63

Sources: Demographic Yearbook Russia 1994–2002. Moscow, Goskomstat, 1994–2002 (in Russian).

**Picture 1. Natural and Migration Increase
in Russia, 1897 - 2003**



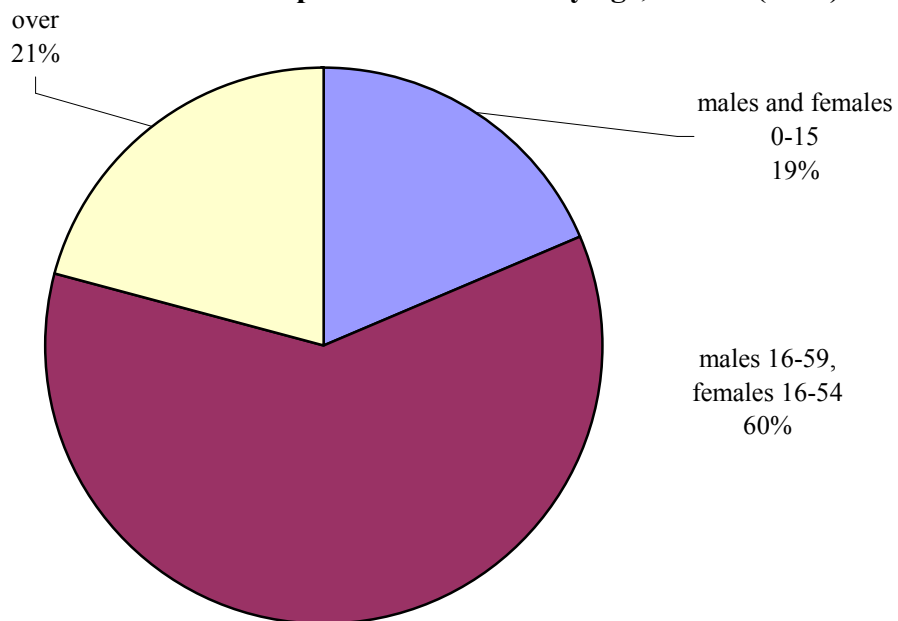
Sources: Population of Russia over Hundred Years (1897–1997). Moscow, 1998, pp. 32–34, 84–85; Population and Migration in the Russian Federation in 1999–2003. Moscow, Goskomstat, 2000–2004 (in Russian).



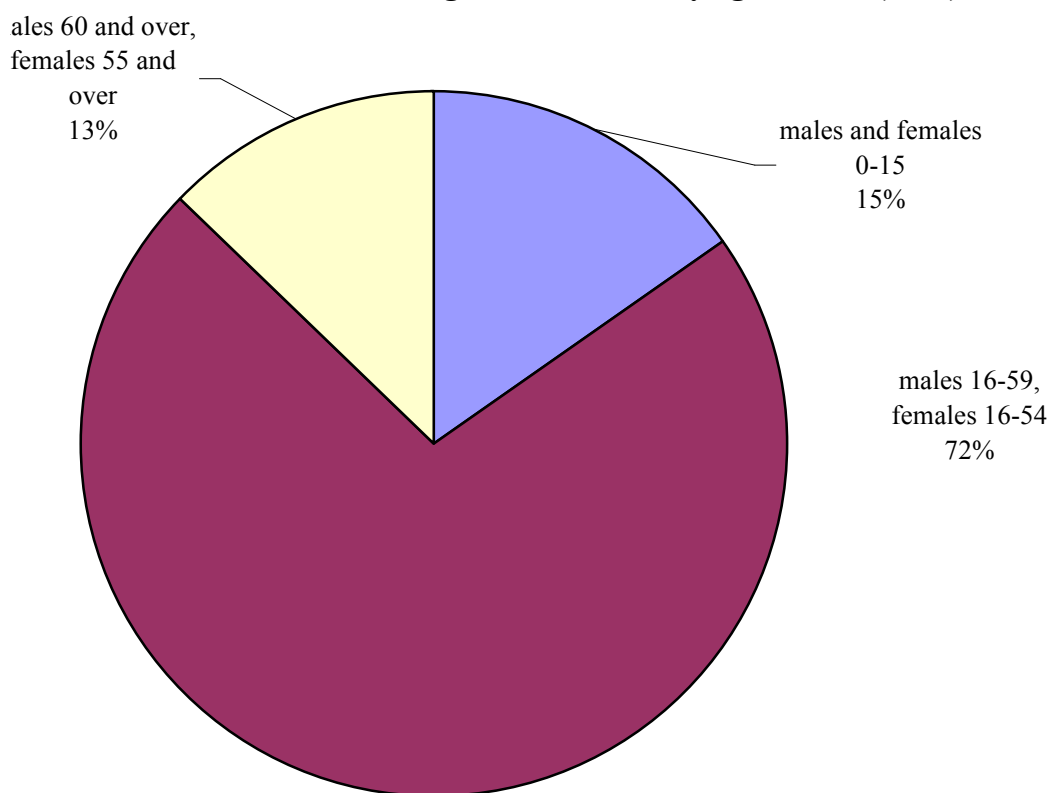
Sources: World Population Prospects: The 2002 Revision. New York, UN, 2003.

males 60 and over,
females 55 and over

Picture 3a. Population structure by age, Russia (2002)

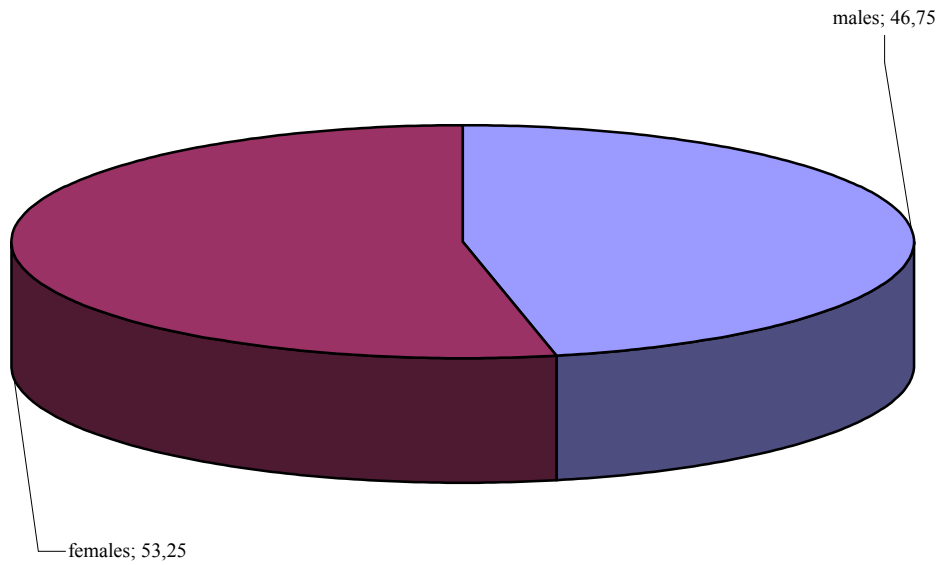


Picture 3b. Immigrants structure by age, Russia (2002)

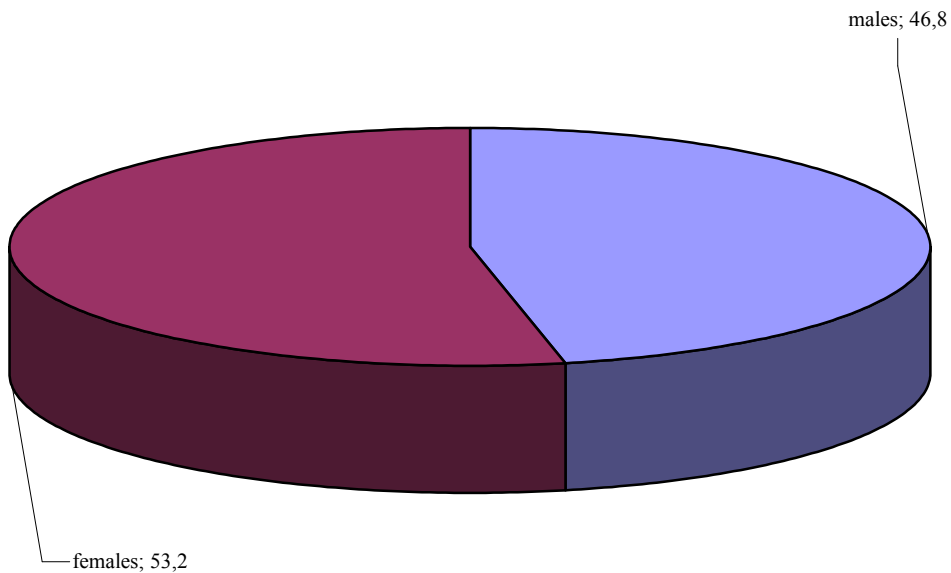


Sources: Demographic Yearbook Russia 2002. Moscow, Goskomstat, 2002 (in Russian).

Picture 4a. Population structure by sex, Russia (2002)



Picture 4b. Immigrants structure by sex, Russia (2002)



Sources: Demographic Yearbook Russia 2002. Moscow, Goskomstat, 2002 (in Russian).

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